HEADS
OF A
SCHEME
FOR ERECTING
Publick Magazines,
To relieve the Neceſſities of the Poor, and ſupply ENGLAND with CORN.

By VILLARS CLARA PITT, fourth Siſter to the Right Honourable WILLIAM PITT, Eſq; Principal Secretary of State.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,

Sold by T. KINNERSLY in St. Paul's Church-Yard; and G. WOODFALL, at Charing-Croſs.

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HEADS of a SCHEME for erecting publick MAGAZINES, to relieve the Neceſſities of the Poor, and ſupply England with Corn.

THE Scheme propoſed is, to erect public Magazines in every County in England, to be filled every Year in ſuch proportion, as ſhall by the Government, be judged convenient, that whenever Corn riſes in the Markets, beyond a fixt ſtandard Price, theſe Magazines ſhall be opened, and the Corn ſold out by the Magiſtrates, at the fixſt ſtandard Price; which ſhall be regulated by Act of Parliament every Year, according to the Exigence of the time being that

that it ſhall be enacted by Parliament, that every Year, no new Corn ſhall be ſold in the Markets, till the quantity of Corn remaining in the public Magazines for the County, is ſold, in order to make room for freſh ſupplys, and prevent damage of Corn. And that the Corn ſo remaining in the Magazines, at the end of each Year, ſhall be ſent to the different Corn Markets, of each County, at the Expence of the Goverment: and ſuch expence paid to the Sheriff of each County, by the Receiver of the Land Tax, out of the Revenue ariſing from the ſaid Land Tax.

The Merchant to furniſh good Wheat at the Rate of 4 Shilings *per* Buſhel, Wincheſter meaſure, at the neareſt place which can be arrived at to the appointed Magazine, by water Carriage, and in ſuch places, where land Carriage is neceſſary, the Government ſhall be at the expence thereof, in like manner as above mentioned.

1. Con-

1. Condition, that the Merchant ſhall bind himſelf in £. 50, 000. Security for the performance of his Contract.

2. That he fix a limited Time for the Delivery of the Corn contracted for.

3. That the Money for the ſaid Corn, ſhall be paid within four Months after the delivery, without deduction, or Fees to public Offices, and that the Mayor of the Town for the time being, be appointed to receive the ſaid Corn.

4. That all Corn imported for the uſe of public Magazines, be exempted from all Dutys, and Charges whatſoever.

5. That in time of War, a ſufficient Convoy be appointed for the Contractor's Ships, at the Time he ſhall notify to the Board of Admiralty, and to be ready to ſail from foreign Ports, without taking charge to convoy other Merchant Ships. The Contractor, binding himſelf on his Side, to freight all his Corn, at one,

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and the ſame time from each foreign Port; and that he ſhall not freight his Ships with any other Merchandice, till the whole cargo of Corn is Freighted. And that only the quantity of Corn contracted for by the Government; ſhall be exempted from Dutys and Charges &c.

OBJEC-

OBJECTIONS

TO THE

SCHEME

FOR ERECTING

Publick Magazines,

FOR

CORN in ENGLAND 1758.

THAT by this Scheme, the public Treaſury will be exhauſted. That it is an infringment of the Liberty of the

Britiſh

Britiſh Subject, as it in fact obliges him to bring his Corn to Market, the Price no ways depending on himſelf; that it thereby hurts the landed Intereſt.

That the Importation of foreign Corn, is a diſcouragement to the Engliſh Farmer, and deprives the induſtrious Labourer of imployment.

That the Government may make a handle of it to impoſe a New Tax.

That it is adding power to the Crown, which deviates from the Conſtitution.

That to render this Scheme practicable, a Regiſter of Land would be neceſſary; and that

that in effect, it would leſſen the Value of Land in England.

The Objection with regard to exhauſting the Public Treaſury, I thus anſwer. The Government do no more than advance the Money for the Payment of the Corn Contract, as the Value of the Corn will be repaid by the Sale of the ſaid Corn, within the Courſe of one Year; ſo that the Government will only remain the Money out of Pocket, the Land Carriage of the Corn may coſt, which they have in their Power to reimburſe, by the Price prefixt in the Markets. Which turns equally to the Account of the Farmer, and landed Intereſt, as to that of the Government: and as no additional Expence is created to the Govern-

ment

ment from this Scheme, I ſee no colour of Reaſon, for laying on a New Tax in Conſequence.

With regard to the Liberty of the Subject, there is no Conſtraint, or Force offered, to oblige him to ſell what he Poſſeſſes; he is at intire Liberty to ſell, or not, as he pleaſes, only that by this Scheme he is prevented diſtreſſing his fellow Subjects, by refuſing to furniſh the Markets, under an exhorbitant Price. The Laws at preſent ſubſiſting with regard to this Point, is Fines, and Impriſonment for any Man, who ſhall keep more Corn by him, than is neceſſary for the Uſe of his Family, by a Statute of Edward the 6th which

is

is ſtill in Force: but from the Change of Cuſtoms and Manners in this Nation, ſince that Period of Time, theſe obſolete Laws are next to impoſſible to be carried into Execution. If the Farmer will content himſelf, with a reaſonable, and uſual Profit, there ſtill remains to him, the ſame Opportunities of ſelling his Corn, as ever; and the Contractors will naturally buy Corn in England preferably, and can Afford to give conſiderably more for it, as from that ſingle Circumſtance, the Expence of Agencies, foreign Duties, Riſks of Shipping; and Damage of Corn at Sea is ſaved, beſides the certain Expence of bringing it over. And at all Events, the Contract being only from Year to Year, it may,

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whenever judged convenient, be made with a Company of Engliſh Huſbandmen. As to the Labourer, I anſwer, that a man muſt have Bread to ſupport Labour; and that the preſent high Price, puts it out of the power of his Labour, and Induſtry to purchaſe it. That much too large a Proportion of Land in England, is already converted into arable, owing to the Draw-back granted on the Exportation of Corn, which has excited the Farmer to attend leſs to the Culture of Sheep, and taught him the fatal Method of exporting Corn, for the Sake of the Draw-back, neceſſary to the Subſiſtance of his Fellow Subjects. The Culture of Sheep is moſt neceſſary, uſeful, and advantagious to this Iſland in general, and to the Farmer as an indivi-

dual;

dual; the Wool, in few Years, much more than repays the Price of the Sheep, and keeping, and ſupplies a Manufacture, the moſt lucrative to this Nation, of any Branch of Trade, which imploys a greater number of Hands, all the Year round, and of all Ages, and Sexes, than the Culture of Grain can poſſibly do. In Agriculture, only the Young, and the Robuſt can find Employment in the Woolen Manufactures, both Age, and Infancy may get their Livelihood by Carding, and Spinning; and the Price of Proviſions once reduced, our Manufactures would be accompliſhed at leſs Expence, and conſequently the Merchant enabled to afford ſupplying foreign Markets with Engliſh Woolens, on more reaſonable Terms; whereby the ſure Conſe-

quence

quence is, encreaſe of Commerce, the Effect, a ſtill greater number of Hands being employed at home. At preſent the Engliſh Merchant is under ſold in all Foreign Markets, and Goods of inferior Goodneſs, and different Qualities of other Nations preferred, ſingly from the high Price, from Neceſſity affixed upon all Engliſh Commodities. The ſole Cauſe of which is, the exorbitant Price of Living in England, which muſt of Courſe encreaſe the Price of Labour in Proportion. Therefore, remove the Cauſe, the Effects muſt naturally, and of Courſe ceaſe by Degrees.

The Objection with regard to throwing additional Power into the Crown, does not appear to me, every thing relative to this

this Scheme, is offered to the Direction of Parliament. The ſupreme Power of this Kingdom is veſted in King, and Parliament; therefore, where ſupreme Power is already veſted, I do not ſee the Poſſibility of adding any thing to it.

I do not in any degree comprehend, a Regiſter of Land, rendered more neceſſary from this Scheme: ſince whether Corn is ſold at 4. s. *per* Buſhel or 14. s. the Reaſons with regard to a public Regiſter of Land are ſtill the ſame: nor do I any more comprehend that the fixing the Price of Corn to the uſual and accuſttomed Price for many ſucceſſive Years paſſed, can poſſibly leſſen the Value of Land from what it was at that Period of Time eſtimated

mated. And with regard to the aſcertaining the Value of Lands, the Calculation will be more eaſily made from a certain Price being affix'd upon Corn for the future.

COPY
OF A
PETITION
TO HIS
MAJESTY, 1758.

Moſt Gracious Sovereign,

WE your Majeſty's moſt Dutifull, and Loyal Subjects, Inhabitants of the Cities of London, and Weſtminſter, and others your Majeſty's Loyal Subjects whoſe Names are underwritten, humbly Intreat your Majeſty's Royal Permiſſion, to lay the Miſeries your moſt Faithfull, and Loyal Subjects throughout theſe Kingdoms are reduced to, from the exor-

exorbitant Price of Corn, which is at preſent ſuch, as was never before known in theſe Kingdoms, even in Years of Scarcity, which through the Mercy of God, has not for many Years paſs'd, been the Cauſe of Diſtreſs to the Poor, but ſolely the rapacious Cruelty of their Fellow Subjects, not ſufficiently provided againſt by the Laws at preſent ſubſiſting in theſe Kingdoms. We, therefore, your Majeſty's Faithful, and Loyal Subjects, humbly intreat, for ourſelves, and diſtreſs'd Fellow Subjects, that theſe our Diſtreſſes may be laid at the Foot of your Majeſty's Throne, and Graciouſly taken under Royal Conſideration, appointing ſuch Remedy for the ſame, as to your Majeſty's Royal Wiſdom, and Goodneſs ſhall appear moſt proper. And we your Majeſty's Humble, and Loyal Petitioners, with Hearts full of Zeal, and Duty to your Majeſty's Sacred Perſon, and Government, humbly intreat, that the Scheme for Erecting public Magazines for Corn, and fixing the Price thereof,

every

every Year by Parliament, may, together with this our humble Petition, be laid at your Majeſty's Feet, as a ſure and certain Means to prevent the engroſſing Corn for the future, and thereby cauſing inexpreſſible Diſtreſs, and Miſery to the Laborious, and Poorer ſort of your Majeſty's Subjects. And we your Majeſty's moſt humble, and Loyal Petitioners, ardently Pray Almighty God, to afford his ſpecial Bleſſings, and Protection to your Majeſty's Sacred Perſon, and Royal Line, long to Reign in Proſperity over theſe Kingdoms, and Perpetuate the Bleſſings we are gratefully Senſible of, from your Majeſty's Gracious, Mild, and juſt Government, whom God preſerve, is the Zealous and Conſtant Prayer, of your Majeſty's moſt Humble, Loyal Subjects, and Petitioners.

LETTER

TO THE

LORD MAYOR of London.

My Lord,

BEING Inform'd your Lordſhip, with the Court of Aldermen, intend taking the Scheme for Erecting public Magazines for Corn, together with the Petition to his Majeſty in conſequence, under conſideration; give me leave to lay before you, ſome freſh Objections which have been Tranſmitted to me ſince the Publication of the Pamphlet, and the manner in which I anſwer them, as the ſame may occur on the inſuing Occaſion. The great expence which the erecting Buildings for the purpoſe of Magazines would

would neceſſarily occaſion, is offer'd as an Objection. I apprehend this expence abſolutely unneceſſary, there being already Buildings in moſt Towns in England, which may be converted to this uſe: and that for the Convenience of the Inhabitants, it will be moſt adviſable to have a great number of Magazines in each County: therefore, none of them will require a large Building to contain the neceſſary quantity of Corn in each Magazine ſeperately. It is alſo objected, that ſome expence, and care will be requiſite to preſerve the Corn, which in the Scheme is not provided for. I anſwer, no other expence, or care is required, than turning the Corn from time to time, which is the buſineſs of a common Labourer, conſequently can be attended with little expence, and that the care, and direction of the public Magazines, will very properly be Veſted in the Mayor of the Towns, where ſuch Magazines ſhall be Erected. The Mayor

may

may be repaid all neceſſary expences relating to the Magazines, by the Sheriff of the County, producing, and Signing his Accompts, and the Sheriff be repaid by the Receiver of the Land Tax, in like manner as is Propoſed for carrying the Corn remaining in the Magazines at the end of the Year, to the different Markets of each County.

It is farther Objected, that there is danger, if the Corn in the Magazines ſhould be ſpoil'd in keeping, that at the end of the Year, people would in general be obliged to eat bad bread, as no new Corn is to be brought into the Markets, till that in the Magazines is Sold.

As it is a fact well known, that Corn with proper Care, may be Preſerved many Years in Perfection, if the Corn in the Magazines ſhould at any time ſuffer Damage, it muſt be intirely owing to Negligence in thoſe who have the direction. And among ſo grear a number of Gentle-

men

men as Compoſe the Heads of Corporations in England, it is ſcarcely to be imagined that any Number of them will be Guilty of ſo cruel a Negligence of their Duty towards Society, as to ſuffer the neceſſary ſuſtenance of their fellow Subjects to be deſtroyed, for want of giving proper Orders for its Preſervation, eſpecially as the Mayor of a Corporation may be eſteemed the Magiſtrate of the People. I believe, I may venture to aſſert, that Corn, till it has been kept a twelve month, is not properly fit for uſe, nor is there a poſſibillity of grinding new Corn without a mixture of Old, otherwiſe the Mill would be choked; and it is a trite Obſervation, that old Corn yields conſiderably more Flour, then Corn of equal goodneſs before it is dry, and harden'd. The reaſon of which is obvious, from the waſte occaſion'd in the Mill, the new Grain ſticking about it.——That I have taken the Liberty of giving your Lordſhip this trouble, I flatter myſelf

you

you will excuſe from the Motive which occaſions it; ſingly compaſſion for the Sufferings, and infinite Diſtreſs of the induſtrious Poor; ſuch at preſent, as no private fortune can Relieve; general diſtreſs being only to be remedy'd by the Legiſlature. Senſible of my own inability to ſo great, tho' neceſſary an undertaking, it is not without reluctance my Name appears upon this Occaſion to the Public; the motive only I can without confuſion Avow; the Ardent deſire of ſeeing the Neceſſities of the poor relieved, which I am perſuaded no humane Eye can obſerve without the higheſt Commiſeration, and wiſh to aſſiſt. Forgive me that I have thus long Treſſpaſs'd on your time, and give me leave to Subſcribe myſelf,

MY LORD,

Your LORDSHIP's

LONDON,
1758.

Moſt obedient humble Servant,

V. C. PITT.